

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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On the 12th of May, 1809, Mr. MADOCKS made, in the House of Commons, a charge in substance as follows: "I affirm, then, that Mr. DICK purchased a seat in the House of Commons for the borough of Cashel, through the agency of the HONOURABLE HENRY WELLESLEY, who acted for, and on behalf of the *Treasury*: that, upon a recent question, of the last importance, when Mr. Dick had determined to vote according to his conscience, the noble Lord, CASTLEREAGH, did intimate to that gentleman the necessity of either his voting with the government, or resigning his seat in that House; and that Mr. Dick, sooner than vote against principle, did make choice of the latter alternative, and vacate his seat accordingly. To this transaction I charge the Right Hon. Gentleman, Mr. PERCEVAL, as being privy and having connived at it. This I will engage to prove by witnesses at your bar, if the House will give me leave to call them."—At the end of a long Debate upon this subject, the question was taken upon a motion for an *Inquiry* into the matter; that there appears from the reports of the proceedings, published in the papers, to have been 395 Members present, that, out of 395, only 85 voted for the motion, which, of course, was lost, there being 310 out of the 395, who voted *against the motion for Inquiry*.—In the year 1802, this same Mr. PERCEVAL, being then Attorney General, prosecuted PHILIP HAMLIN, a Tinman of Plymouth, for having committed the crime of offering Mr. Addington £2,000, to give him a place in the Custom House; upon this occasion, Mr. Perceval demanded judgment upon the said Hamlin, for the sake of PUBLIC JUSTICE; and the Judge, after expatiating upon the "incalculable mischief," to which such crimes must naturally lead, sentenced the said Hamlin to pay a *fine* of a hundred pounds to the king, and to be imprisoned for three Calendar months.—N. B. This is the same Mr. Perceval, who, in 1807, set up the Godly cry of "No Popery."

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## PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

BELONGING to this subject, nothing more important has taken place, than the Speech, made by the SPEAKER of the House of Commons, on Thursday, the 1st of this month. —This Speech, of which I am fully warranted in saying, that I have a *correct report*, I shall here insert, at full length; and, afterwards offer, in the shape of a Letter, such observations upon it, as appear to me necessary, and likely to be useful. —This Speech was made in a Committee of the whole House upon Mr. CURWEN's *Reform bill*; and, I beg the reader, as he proceeds in the perusal, to contrast the doctrines and the sentiments, which the Speaker has now thought proper to express, with the doctrines and the sentiments proclaimed, *by both sides of the House*, upon Mr. MADOCKS's motion of the 12th of May; and to apply these doctrines and sentiments to the notorious cases of CASTLEREAGH, HENRY WELLESLEY, and PERCEVAL, and to what was advanced, upon Mr. Madocks's motion, by those more immediately connected with the borough-mongers, that is to say, those who sell and deal in Seats in Parliament.

### SPEECH

OF THE RIGHT HON. THE SPEAKER:

Thursday the 1st of June, 1809.

MR. WHARTON,

BEFORE you proceed to put the Question of Reading this Bill a first time, I wish to offer myself to your notice:

And although I am at all times unwilling to request the attention of the Committee of this House, thinking that I should render them no service by mixing in their general Debates, and feeling also the inconvenience of being precluded afterwards by my other duties in this House from explaining or defending my opinions in any subsequent stage of discussion; nevertheless there are some subjects of a paramount importance, upon which I do conceive that I have a personal duty imposed upon me (and perhaps the House may think in some degree an official duty) to deliver the sentiments which I entertain: —And such is the present.

The Question now before us, is no less than this—Whether *Seats in this House shall be henceforth publicly saleable?*—A proposition, at the sound of which, our Ancestors would have startled with indignation; but a practice, which in these days and within these walls, in utter oblivion of every former maxim and feeling of Parliament, has been avowed and justified.

We are now, however, come to a pass from which we have no retreat. Upon this Question we must decide, Aye or No. To do nothing is to do every thing. If we forbear to reprobate this traffic, we give it legality and sanction. And unless we now proceed to brand and stigmatize it by a prohibitory Law, I am firmly persuaded that even before the short remnant of this Session is concluded, we shall see that Seats in this House are advertised for

sale by Public Auction: And we shall have brought a greater scandal upon Parliament and the Nation, than this country has ever known since Parliaments have had an existence.

According to the course which these Debates have taken, three distinct points have been put in issue: First, Whether the Traffic be a Political Evil; in the next place, Whether it be any Parliamentary Offence; and lastly, Whether there is any safe and practicable Remedy by which this mischief can be put down for the time to come.

Sir; Into the first point, Whether this be a Political Evil, I do not mean to enter at any length; nor is it necessary to my purpose.

That the Influence of Property in maintaining Civil Order is of the highest importance, no man living can doubt: it is the firmest cement to all the relations of social life, it gives Stability to the State, and Prosperity to the Empire. That the Possessions of Property may, and must, and ought to have a predominating Influence in the Election of Members to serve in this House, I think is equally clear. But, that, abandoning all their legitimate rights of Influence, and laying aside all the virtuous and generous Motives of Friendship, Affection, and the fair preference of Talents and Integrity to fill places of such high Public Trust, they should go to a shameless and open market; that they should sell the Attachment of their Friends, Neighbours, and Dependents, for dry and sordid gain; and sell it to utter Strangers, of whose Qualities they can have no other Estimate than the Weight of their Purses; this does indeed appear to me to be a great Political Evil, and a great Public Grievance. It degrades and debases the habits of the higher ranks of life, who confess their own sense of the nature of these transactions, by the concealment with which they seek to cover them: It taints also and contaminates the general Character of Parliament: and it furnishes the most formidable weapons to those who are professing, and I am willing to believe sincerely professing, to reform, but as I fear, are, in truth and in fact, by the tendency of their endeavours, labouring to subvert the entire System of our Parliamentary Representation.

With respect, Sir, to the next Question, whether these practices are any Parliamentary Offence. That it is a high Parliamentary Offence, every page of our History, Statutes, and Journals, appears to me to bear evidence.

It is essential to the very idea of Elections that they should be free. Such is the antient language of the Statute of Westminster in the reign of Edward the First, speaking of Elections in general; such also is the modern language of the Bill of Rights, with reference specifically to the Election of Members to serve in Parliament; and we have a memorable instance in the year immediately following the Revolution of the sense in which this fundamental principle was understood, in the case of the Cinque Ports; for by a Statute in the Second of William and Mary, it is not enacted only, but declared, that for the Lord Warden to nominate or recommend any Member to serve in any Port or Place within his jurisdiction, was a violation of the Freedom of Parliaments, and contrary to the Antient Laws and Constitution of the Realm.

In the description of these Offences, which constitute a Violation of our Privileges, there is nothing technically narrow, but the Rule is to be tried by its substantial Effects. Force, Fraud, Corrupt practices and undue influence of any sort, by which the freedom of Elections is controlled, have been reprobated in all ages.

These offences, if pursued as matter of personal delinquency, were antiently triable before the Committee of Privileges; if they touched the Seat, they were cognizable in the Committee of Elections. At a later period, when these Committees were united, all such offences were of course tried indiscriminately before this joint jurisdiction. And so things continued until happily the functions of the Committee of Elections were transferred by the Grenville Act to a better Tribunal. But the general conservation and vindication of our Rights and Privileges, except so far as divested by special Statute, still resides, as we all know, in the House at large, and its Committee of Privileges.

Whoever therefore looks into the proceedings of all these several jurisdictions according to their different periods, will find abundant traces of the inquiries which have been instituted, and the censures which have followed upon offences of all these descriptions. And from the period of the Revolution, we may see them exemplified in the prosecutions conducted by sir Edward Seymour against the Directors of the New East India Company in the reign of King William; in the Reports of the Secret Committee upon the last ten years of Sir Robert Walpole's administration during the last reign; in the charge brought



against Lord North upon the Milbourn Port Election, and the general character of these Offences is evidenced by all the language of similar proceedings, in our own time.

But, Sir, beyond this:—Practices of this description are not only offences by the Law of Parliament, they have been long since adjudged to be criminal by the Common Law of the Realm.

The Bribery of Votes was adjudged by the Court of King's Bench, in the early part of the present Reign, to have been a Common Law Offence, even though no precedents could be adduced to show it, and to have been punishable as such long before its increased prevalence made Parliament deem it necessary to restrain it by special Statutes. And in like manner any previous agreement or compact to control the Votes of Electors (even although the Electors are not themselves bribed) has been adjudged to be illegal upon general grounds of policy and jurisprudence. — Such was the Case which arose in the Burgh of Stirling in the year 1773, where some of the Town Council had entered into a corrupt Agreement to divide the Profits of the Burgh, and what they were also pleased to call the Parliamentary Profits, and to bring no person into the Magistracy but such as should vote with them upon all Parliamentary Elections; under this Agreement, Elections were had and passed unanimously. But when this Agreement was discovered and questioned, although it was manifest that the other Electors were neither party nor privy to the Agreement, nor had profited thereby, the Court of Session not only declared the Agreement itself to be illegal, unwarrantable, and *contra bonos mores*, but also that by reason of the undue influence under which such Elections were had, all those Elections were void and null. This Judgment afterwards came by Appeal to the House of Lords, and was there, in November 1775, affirmed. — At a later date, another question of this sort came before an Election Committee under the Grenville Act, from the county of Berwick, in 1781. The Petition there stated that two of the Candidates had by themselves, and friends, combined to control the Election, by chusing first one of those two Candidates, who should sit for a certain number of years or sessions, and then that the other should be elected to succeed him. The Election Committee before whom that Case was tried and proved, reported the Agreement to be corrupt and illegal, and voided the Election.

What, therefore, it remains for us to do is plain. And as our Ancestors, when they found the censures of Parliament, and the decisions of the Common Law, were insufficient to restrain the growing practice of Bribery to Voters, proceeded to superadd the cumulative penalties of the Statute Law; so also it is for us, who have before us such flagrant proofs that the traffic in Seats has broken through the existing checks, to put it down by a new Prohibitory Law.

And now, Sir, we are brought to the last consideration—whether we can by any safe and practicable Remedy suppress the mischief: And of this I have no doubt, if with sincerity and diligence we apply ourselves to the task.

According to my views of this subject, the Committee will perceive, that I must naturally desire in the first place that our Law should be in itself declaratory; lest we should impair the principle which we are endeavouring to strengthen. The definition or description of the offence should also be marked with such a degree of precision that we may not include in it things or consequences beyond our own intentions. And the prohibitory provisions should be such as are most analogous to the rest of our Election Laws upon corresponding cases.

Of course, the honourable Member who has brought in the present Bill will not be surprized that I should think he has fallen short of the true point, in not making it declaratory. As to the main part of his enactments, he will also be prepared for my dissenting from the use of such lax and wide modes of expression as he has employed; a defect into which it is no peculiar reproach for him to have fallen, as our modern forms of legislation have too much involved all our provisions in language so cumbrous that it is generally difficult to discover their sense and substance, through the multitude of words with which they are overcharged. But beyond this, it is quite impossible for me to consent to that part of his proposed enactment which makes the tenure of Seats in this House dependent upon Judgments to be obtained in the Courts below, or in any way puts the trial of our own Rights out of our own accustomed jurisdiction.

With regard to the Oath proposed by the hon. gentleman, it is such in its present form as I should entirely object to. I do not know that a proper Oath for a proper purpose is in itself an exception-

able provision by law. Nor do I think that for solemnity or importance, so long as any Oaths are used in Election Laws, that any occasion for it could be more suitable; agreeing as I do very much with sir William Blackstone in opinion, that the Oath, if administered to the elected, would be far more effectual than when given to the elector. Nevertheless, knowing that to many persons any form of Oath whatever upon this subject would be highly obnoxious, and not thinking it indispensably necessary to the efficacy of the Bill, I should not be disposed to insist upon it.

What I should require would be, that the party who purchased should not reap the profit of his bargain, but should fall under the same disability as that enacted by the Act of Wm. the Third, which I think would be improved also, if it excluded him not for that vacancy alone, but for the whole Parliament. The party who received the price of his venality should also of course forfeit it, with any further penalty which it might be thought right to superadd.

And, beyond this, I would think it a proper course to declare it by positive law, what is implied by the judgments which I have already cited—that by such traffic each party becomes guilty of a Misdemeanor.

Upon the whole, Sir, that for which I am most anxious is the establishment of the principle; being firmly persuaded that honourable minds, which may have hitherto deviated from what I think was the strait path of their duty, or may have been made to vacillate by the practices which they saw prevailing around them with impunity—will shrink from them with abhorrence, when they find them condemned by a specific law: And other men, if actuated by motives less honourable, will be restrained by fears not less efficacious.

I shall therefore listen with satisfaction to any amendment that goes this length, accompanied by such brief and distinct provisions as may give a reasonable security that its execution will be accomplished.—And I shall be contented to lay aside for the present all questions of doubtful policy or difficult expressions; thinking it better to reserve them for future experience, and, if necessary, for future legislation.

I would presume also to recommend this course to the House, as the most prudent, and the most likely to contribute to the furtherance of the public good, and its ulti-

mate passing into a law; on my own part most cordially and earnestly hoping for its success, as a measure which has now become indispensable to the honour of this House and of the Country.

TO THE  
INDEPENDENT PEOPLE OF HAMPSHIRE.

LETTER IV.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

*What Sort of Reform ought to be made?*

GENTLEMEN,

I. In stating the question, which we now have to discuss, it is impossible to overlook the circumstance, that there is *one sort of reform* now on foot; that it is now actually before the House of Commons; and, which is, in a most distinguished degree, worthy of your attention, this measure has been entertained, has been kindly received, nursed and dandled, rocked, swathed, and pap-fed by . . . . . *whom?* Why, by those very persons, who voted against censure upon Castlereagh, on the motion relating to his offer to swap a writership for a seat; yes, by those persons, who, when Mr. Madocks distinctly charged Castlereagh, Henry Wellesley, and Perceval (the Tinman's prosecutor), with trafficking in a seat; those persons, who, upon this occasion, voted 310 to 85, that there should be *no inquiry*; and many of whom openly avowed, that the thing was not only common, not only in general use by all ministers, but a thing perfectly proper. Well, now mark, that these persons, on both sides of the House, *approve* of Mr. CURWEN's bill; and, when you consider what their conduct was upon Mr. Madocks's motion, you will easily guess *what they expect from this bill*.

II. This consideration alone furnishes a pretty good presumptive proof, that Mr. Curwen's bill is not at all calculated to answer any useful purpose; to contribute, even in the smallest degree, towards the checking of those manifold corruptions, and that waste of the public money, under which the nation is now suffering so much disgrace and misery. But, we will not let off this bill so lightly; it requires to be fully exposed; for, under the garb of "*a reform*," it tends, in my opinion, to the prolonging, if not perpetuating, the traffic in parliamentary seats, and of course, all those infamous bargains, by which the blood as well as the treasure of the nation become the object of barter. Before,



however, we proceed to an examination into the proposed provisions of this bill; before we proceed to inquire, whether *this* be the *sort* of reform, that is wanted, it is quite necessary for us to trace the progress of this reforming bill; for, in that progress we shall clearly discover, what the 310, who voted against Mr. Madocks's motion, expect from this bill.

III. This bill was introduced *before* Mr. MADOCKS made his motion, the account of which motion is contained in the motto to this sheet; but, when leave was given to bring in the bill, Mr. MADOCKS had *given notice of his motion*.—Now, mark: the bill has leave to be brought in; and, when Mr. Madocks makes his motion, he is told to wait, and see *what effect Mr. Curwen's bill will produce*. But, Mr. Madocks's motion having been got over; "a stand" having been made, the two factions seemed determined to throw out the bill altogether; or, at most, to let it go no further than just to get into a committee. This was pretty plainly expressed in the debate of the 26th of May, upon the motion for going into a committee. But, during that debate, corruption received an assault, which appeared to have shaken its nerves. In that debate Sir Francis Burdett expressly denied, that *that House was the Commons' House of Parliament*; he distinctly said: "this House is *not* now the *Commons of England in Parliament assembled*;" and that he would never again call it so. This speech, which, from beginning to end, was well calculated for the purpose, appears to have excited much sensibility in the SPEAKER, who, after all the other intimations usual upon such occasions, actually called Sir Francis *to order*. Lord Archibald Hamilton having observed, that, "by the openly avowed and defended corruptions, the House itself *appeared to have disclaimed its title*," the SPEAKER replied: "It is my duty to call any member *to order*, who affirms, that *this is not the House of Commons*; and I will do it *as long as the House will support me in it*." Sir Francis resumed with a statement of his reasons for not calling that assembly the House of Commons, which statement was, in a very pointed manner, addressed to the Speaker.—There can be no doubt, that it was *this speech*, which produced, in the mind of the Speaker, a resolution to break through general custom, and to deliver his sentiments, not upon Mr. Curwen's bill, but upon the avowals and doctrines to which he had lately been obliged to listen, and which

he appears to have been convinced must, if suffered to stand as the avowals and doctrines of the House, produce, in a short time, an universal persuasion of the worse-than-uselessness of that House.—Therefore, when the House went into a Committee, on the 1st of June, and, of course, gave the SPEAKER an opportunity of delivering his sentiments, he made that Speech, which is inserted in the former part of this Number, and which, in the newspaper reports, has been read with great interest by all ranks of people.—A new turn has thus been given to the fortunes of Mr. Curwen's bill. The seat-merchants and stand-makers appear to have become less audacious; and, according to present appearances, the bill, with various modifications, will finally pass.—But, what is well worthy of notice here, is, how completely the Speaker justifies all that we have said against the practice of selling seats; against the wretches concerned in such traffic; and as to the mischievous consequences that must arise from it. When, on the ever-memorable 12th of May (it was *morning* when the division took place) the House by a majority of 310 against 85, declared, that there should be *no inquiry*, though Mr. Madocks *distinctly charged* three members of the House with having been concerned in the *sale of a seat*; upon that occasion, there was heard, from all quarters and corners of the House, the exclamation: "a stand! a stand!" "It is," exclaimed many voices at once, "*high time to make a stand against popular encroachment*;" just, of course, as if the people were guilty of *insolence* in coming, by one of their representatives, to complain, that seats were bought and sold. But what says the Speaker? The Speaker has seen much and read more about proceedings in parliament; but, he had never either seen or read of any thing like *what he saw and heard*, during the night of the eleventh and the morning of the twelfth of May last, and which I wish with all my soul, the whole of the people of England could have *seen and heard*; for, if they could, there would be no *writing* necessary about Parliamentary Reform. Conviction would have been, at once, imbibed from a sight of *actions*, such as will never be forgotten, by those who were witnesses of them. What says the Speaker? Does he talk of *a stand* against popular encroachment? Does he avow the practice of seat-selling, and say that it makes a part of the Constitution? Does he say, with Mr. WINDHAM and Mr. GEORGE JOHNSTONE, that the sell-



ing of seats was a thing carried on amongst our ancestors to a greater extent than amongst us? No: he says, "that it is a proposition, at the sound of which our ancestors would have *startled with indignation*." We have heard the avowal with indignation; and, because we have, in our several meetings, expressed that indignation, we have, by this same House of Commons, been called *factionous rabble*. The Speaker, as to this point, has now spoken to the House the sentiments of the people. He has gone full as far as any of us, upon this subject of complaint; and, it is no wonder, that his hearers were, as it is said they were, thunder-struck at his speech, which speech, as to its allegations, was quite equal to any speech of Mr. Madocks.

IV. Now, as to the probable effect of this bill of Mr. Curwen's, for the passing of which bill the Speaker appears to have been so anxious, my opinion has already been stated, that it will be *no reform* at all; that it will only serve the corrupt crew as a pretence for *having made* a "moderate reform;" and that, unless care be taken to watch, detect, and expose the measure in its progress, it will become a source of much deception and mischief.—The Speaker, after expressing his indignation at the doctrine, that it was right for seats in parliament to be bought and sold like stalls in Smithfield; after dwelling upon the profligacy of the open avowal of the long existence of that, for having asserted the existence of which so many men have suffered fine, imprisonment, and pillory; after having reprobated the acknowledged existence of that, for endeavouring to accomplish what would have remedied which, Palmer, Muir, and Gerald were sent to Botany Bay, and Tooke and Hardy were tried for high treason; after having expressed his horror of the conduct of those, who had openly and unblushingly acknowledged, that it had been common for the ministers (to which ever party belonging) to buy and sell seats in parliament, and to bargain for the votes of those members, to whom the said seats were sold; after telling the House, what a scandal this was to the parliament and the country, how directly in violation of every principle of the constitution, the Speaker said distinctly, that, to buy or sell a seat in parliament was, and always had been, *an offence at common law*. Well, then, does not Castlereagh, Henry Wellesley, and Perceval (the Tinman's prosecutor) stand charged, by Mr. Madocks, of this offence? And

have not the House refused to inquire into the matter? Are not these things notorious? And, is not this a pretty good beginning in the way of reform? Have we not great reason to repose confidence in those, who voted against that inquiry? Must not Mr. Curwen's bill, which *they* approve of, be a fine thing for *us*? They, several of them, repeatedly declared, that, supposing what Mr. Madocks charged against Castlereagh and Perceval to be true, to the full extent, *they should not think the worse of them for it*. Must not Mr. Curwen's bill be, then, a very pretty sort of reform, seeing that these same persons like it very well?—But, let us now come to its provisions. What is its professed *immediate* object? It is this: *to prevent, in future, the sale of seats in the House of Commons*. And what is its ultimate object, *to prevent the members from voting away the people's money, in order that they themselves may pocket a share of it*.—This, turn the question about and about, as long as you please, is the main object, which every man of sense has in view, when he talks of a reform in parliament. The House of Commons, according to the constitution, are the people's stewards; the guardians of the national purse; and, what is complained of in the House, as it now stands, is, that many of the members, many of the guardians of the people's purse, do receive into their own pockets, money voted by them out of that purse.—While this is the case, we, who wish for a reform in parliament, think it downright nonsense to talk of a *representation of the people*; and Mr. Curwen, apparently in the hope of checking the evil, proposes a bill, which, as he seems to think, will prevent the actual *sale of seats*, or the *exchange of them for offices under the government*. This he proposes to do by *oaths and penalties*. Members are to swear, that they have given no money for their seats, and seat-sellers are to swear that they have made no bargain for any office or title, for any seat placed at the disposition of the minister.—Now, for my part, I am convinced that the Oath, if taken, would have no other effect than that of excluding some few men of fortune and of good intentions, who might otherwise get in by means of their money; for, can any man believe, that the miscreant who should enter the House of Commons with the sole view of turning his vote to a good account, with the sole view of selling the sound of his voice, or of saving his forfeit carcass from the hands of a swindled and justly enraged creditor; can any man, who has not



taken leave of his senses, believe, for one moment, that such a miscreant, if such an one should be found, would hesitate to take Mr. Curwen's, or any other, *oath* that could be tendered to him?—But, does not the Reader see how many ways would and must offer for the evading of any such oath? It would be impossible so to frame a law as to stop up all the crevices that an ingenious rogue would discover. We have already about one hundred and twenty statutes, made for the express purpose of preventing what it is now proposed to prevent; and, they have all been found to be ineffectual. Nay, the Speaker himself tells us, that the thing now to be put a stop to is already an offence at Common Law; and, if *prosecutions* do not now take place against those, who are charged with having committed offences of this sort, what reason have we to suppose, that any law, now to be passed, will, by this same House of Commons, be caused to have effect? If there is to be no punishment for the *past*, why should there be any for the *future*? Many members of the House expressly declared, that they did not think the worse of the ministers for their having been concerned in selling a seat in parliament, supposing the charge to be true; and, what are we to expect, then, from an *oath* intended to prevent the traffic in seats?—After all, however, the Oath, supposing it to be adopted, and supposing it never to be taken falsely, would not answer, it appears to me, any useful purpose.—What we want is, a House composed of members having interests and feelings in common with *the whole mass of the people of property*; and, how are we to have this as long as an individual returns, of his own will, several members to the House of Commons; and as long as nine tenths of the people of property have no share whatever in returning members to that House?—Mr. Grey's Petition stated, that *one hundred and fifty four individuals* returned *three hundred and seven* members to the House of Commons. This is a notorious fact; and, Mr. Curwen's Oath, supposing it to have all the effect that can possibly be wished for from it, does not pretend to go one inch towards the removal of this evil. All that it professes to do; nay, all that the Speaker himself seemed to hope for from this bill was, that it would cause seats to be *given* in cases where they are now *sold*. He talks of the shame of carrying the seats to a market amongst *strangers*; but appears to have no objection at all to their being given to rela-

tions or *friends*.—We will first see how far Mr. Curwen's Oath would be likely to answer the Speaker's purpose, and then we will see how his purpose would square with the interests of the nation.

V. Now, for instance, I, in 1802, saw a *Doctor of Divinity*, who had two seats in the House of Commons to dispose of, at that general election. The Doctor, who had come to London for the purpose, said, in my presence, that his intention was to exchange his seats with the minister for some dignity, or something good, in the church. Whether the swap actually took place, or not, I cannot say; but, such was the reverend trader's intention.—Now, supposing such an intention to have been carried into execution; supposing the Doctor to have been made a Dean, or a Bishop, and supposing the ministers to have given the seats to two of their own tribe, would not these two have taken the oath very safely? Neither the lay minister nor the divine Doctor would have been sworn. They would have had no oath tendered them relative to the transaction; and yet, is it possible to form an idea of any transaction more corrupt, more disgraceful to the parliament, or more injurious to the people?—Suppose the owner of any borough wishes to sell his seats. He offers them to the treasury, and he gets so much money for them, it being, in such a case, by no means difficult to see *whom* the money comes from. Very well: the borough-monger gets his money from the minister, and the minister sends down to the borough a couple of fellows to be elected. When they take their seats, supposing them to have consciences, they swear, and they safely swear, that they have given no money for their seats, and that they know of none that has been given.—Thus, supposing a seat to be actually purchased by the minister with the people's money, and then filled by the minister so as to secure him a devoted voice in the House; supposing this, even then, even in such a flagrant case, Mr. Curwen's Oath might be safely taken by the member returned, and to him alone the Oath would, or could, in such case be tendered.

VI. What, then, is the main tendency of this Bill? Why, to give the Treasury a *monopoly* of the saleable Seats. The member cannot, supposing him to have any regard for an Oath, or to be at all afraid of any of the penalties of the Bill, purchase the seat himself, either directly or indirectly; for, I shall suppose the law so



well contrived as to leave no room for evasion. But, the borough-monger would still sell; he must have a market; and, as the Treasury would then be the only market, thither he must carry his article. He would not obtain so high a price; but sell he must, and sell he would, to the minister of the day.—This would be a *reform* with a vengeance. We should see 300 Seats, out of the 658, sold to the Treasury; the Treasury would nominate the members; and those members, bound by Mr. Curwen's bill, and regarding an oath and fearing to incur penalties, would readily and safely take the oath prescribed, or take the seats without the oath. That the ministers would take care to put in such persons as they could trust, there can be no doubt at all; so that when once a parliament was thus packed, it would be quite impossible to obtain the smallest chance of removing any minister; and, as to grievances, the people in India might as well talk of grievances, and with just as much hope of redress.

VII. That this is the sort of "*moderate reform*," which the bill of Mr. Curwen would produce, is, I think, so evident, that it was useless to dwell upon the point so long as I have done. But, even supposing, that the bill should (as the Speaker seems to wish, and to content himself with) prevent the sale of seats, and cause them to be given by the patrons to their friends and relations. Suppose the bill should effect this amiable object, what would it do for the people? How would it contribute towards the independence of parliament?—My lord Shabbaroon, for instance, has got a borough, and he wants money for the couple of seats. But, Mr. Curwen will not let him sell them, either to the minister or any body else. He cannot get money for them. Well, then, he must have money's worth; and he seeks a good sinecure either for himself, or some of the sons or younger brothers of the family of Shabbaroon. He, therefore, puts in his sons or brothers or his attorney and steward, or some other persons totally dependent upon him; and, by the votes of these he obtains his object. Would it not, now, be much better to leave the thing as it is; to leave my lord Shabbaroon to sell his seats to persons, who have the money to spare; who may be independent if they will; and who may do, with that independence, a great deal of good; while, if a law cut off the possibility of their getting into the House, their independence must be useless to the country?

VIII. The SPEAKER seems to have conceived the idea, that those borough-mongers, who now notoriously sell their seats to the highest bidder, would, after the passing of Mr. Curwen's bill, not only not attempt to sell seats again, but would be completely divested even of the desire to sell them, or even to turn them, in any way, whatever, to pecuniary account! This were, indeed, miraculous. What! take from the borough-monger; the trafficker in seats; the vender of votes; take from such a man the desire of still deriving profit from his commodity! Well; if you can do this, Mr. Curwen, your bill is certainly a wonderful invention; but, still, I shall deny, that it is, in any sense of the word, a *reform* of the House of Commons; and I also shall deny, that it will operate to the benefit of the nation. For what do you effect? You put a stop, if this miracle takes place, to the selling of seats and to the obtaining of offices from the minister, through the means of disposing of seats to relations and friends and underlings; but, you are still as far as ever from having *representatives of the people*. The members will still, in fact, be the representatives of particular families and individuals; and, at the very best, you will create a new sort of unprincipled opposition to every ministry that the king may choose. Indeed, there would, in this case, arise a much more complete oligarchy than there is at present. The seats, now sold for money, would be kept in hand; and, the decision, upon every question, would depend upon much fewer free voices, than are now heard in the House of Commons.

IX. Such is the "*moderate Reform*," which Mr. Curwen has in contemplation; and, by which Reform, if he could get the people to believe in its efficacy, he would, I am fully persuaded, do this country more mischief than has been done to it by any man for the last hundred years, Pitt not excepted; and, it is not the less mortifying to reflect, that there is every reason to suppose, that he is sincerely inclined to do good instead of harm.—There is one passage in the speech of the SPEAKER, which I do not clearly comprehend. It is that, where, in speaking of the effect of the scandalous facts, relative to the traffic in seats, lately come to light, and of the new doctrine, upon which the sale of seats has been justified in the House, he says: "it furnishes the most formidable weapons to those, who are professing, and, I am willing to believe, sincerely

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"professing, to *reform*, but, as I fear, are, in truth and in fact, by the tendency of their endeavours, labouring to *subvert*, the entire system of our Parliamentary Representation."—I will not affect to misunderstand, that the Speaker here alludes to those, who, at the public meetings, recently held, in different parts of the kingdom, have declared for a Reform in the Commons' House of Parliament; but, I really do not see the consistency of suspecting such persons of endeavouring, though unintentionally, to *subvert* our system of Parliamentary Representation, when the avowed object of those persons, is, to do away, in the most effectual manner, the evil of which the Speaker complains. To be sure, they mean to go much further; they, and for the reasons which I have stated, see nothing at all in a plan like Mr. Curwen's, but the very likely means of deceiving weak people; of spreading delusion in the country; of drawing a crust over the wound, and thereby rendering the cure more difficult, and leaving small chance of life, except from amputation. In short, what they want is, a *representation of the people*; they want the House of Commons to be *in fact*, what it is *in name*. "Would that men should be what they seem; or that they should seem none!" This is the maxim they act upon. They think it would be a great deal better to have no House of Commons at all, than to have a House of Commons, the seats in which should be bought and sold; but, they are, at the same time, fully convinced, that, unless the people really have the *choosing* of the members, it can be of no consequence at all to them, whether the seats be saleable, or not. If, through the operation of a measure, like that of Mr. Curwen, the monopoly of seats were fixed in the Treasury, and the chance of seeing an independent man lay out his money for a borough were completely done away, we should think our situation a little worse than it now is; but, as to whether seats are sold or not; as to whether some hunks, who has a desire to gild the remnant of his life with a title, takes money or takes empty sound for his seats; this is a matter of very little consequence to the people. Their sufferings and disgrace; the profligate waste of their money, and the disregard of their feelings, arise from such hunks having seats at his disposal at all. It is his *possessing* of the seats, which is the curse to them; and this is a curse, which Mr. Curwen's bill does not attempt to remove.

That bill is, in short, little more than a measure for *regulating* the traffic in parliamentary seats, while it professes to *put an end* to that traffic. And, is it, then, possible, that the Speaker can suppose, that those, who really wish for Reform, will be satisfied with a measure like this?

X. Whatever the Speaker may suppose, Gentlemen, certainly we, who see and who most sorely feel the evils of a system, which, in fact, deprives the people of all voice in the Legislature, shall not be satisfied with any such measure; which, were there no other objection to it, would and must be looked upon with a very suspicious eye, when we see it applauded, when we see it cherished with the kindest attentions, by all those who were the very loudest in opposition to *Mr. Wardle*. We shall find, in our county, that all the well-known speculators and plunderers, all the slaves, who dance attendance upon the great distributor of government favours, will approve of this bill; of this measure, so well calculated to enable them to spread deception through the county, and to enable them to impose upon the unreflecting, by representing a *reform* as having been *begun* by the House of Commons itself. It is surprising how harmoniously all those, who hate the idea of *real* reform, chime in, in praise of this bill of Mr. Curwen. Even the hired news-papers; the papers, which, in a late debate, Mr. Whitbread openly declared to be in the employ of the government; even these downright hired vehicles, part of whose business it is to stifle inquiry into abuses, and to traduce and vilify every man who is an enemy to corruption; even these publications highly approve of Mr. Curwen's bill, which they call a "*temperate reform*."

XI. This is not the Reform that we want. We want a Reform, not that shall consist of new regulations about the manner of disposing of seats; not of prohibitions or permissions, relative to the bargain and sale for offices and seats; we want a Reform, not to consist of a statute to prescribe whether our rights shall be *sold*, *swapped*, or *given* away, but that shall restore those rights to us, their owners. If I find a man has taken away, or, by any means, got possession, of my *field*, I do not, in my proceedings against him, complain of the *manner in which he uses* my field; whether he ploughs it or plants it or lays it down in grass, or whether he lets it to another or keeps it in his own hands. I do not trouble myself with



these matters, with which, indeed, I have nothing to do. I see him in possession of what belongs to me, and I demand it from him; and, really, Mr. Curwen's bill does appear to me as being something like an action in such a case for misuse of the field, instead of an endeavour to recover the field itself. The people demand the right of choosing persons to fill the seats. They, in other words, demand possession of the seats, which they assert to be their own. The justice of the claim is not denied; but, says Mr. Curwen's bill: "let us be *temperate*. You must not "have your seats. That is too much to "demand. But, we will take care, that, "in future, those who have your seats "shall not *sell* them (except, perhaps, to "the minister) but shall *give* them away." Pretty consolation, truly! Almost as good as if a man, when complaining of another for having stolen his horse, were told that the horse was never to be sold again, and only let out to hire once in a time. There may be persons; I do not positively aver, that there are not persons, who may expect some good from this bill; but, to me, I must confess that it appears to be capable of nothing which will not be injurious to the country.

XII. There is one thing, however, which, supposing the bill to pass, may lead to good; and, that is, a *speedy dissolution of parliament*; for, if it be true, that the present House of Commons have been returned in a manner that requires this bill; if the Speaker's description of the state of things be correct; if the provisions of the bill be necessary to insure proper members of parliament; if this be so, the King ought to be addressed to dissolve the House as soon as possible; because, in this very measure the people have wherewith to appeal to, in order to shew, that they were not fairly dealt by in the returning of *this* House of Commons. At any rate, the members of the House ought now to take the purgatory oath proposed by the bill. "No, no." Mr. Perceval will say, perhaps, "it is not a good "way to punish *past offences*." Very true, though you did not think so in the case of Hamlin; but, observe, we do not want to *punish* at all; we only want this House, which has still the power of making laws to bind us, and will have that power for *four or five years yet to come*, to take this oath, whence we are to derive such amazing security; for, it is a shocking thing, Mr. Curwen, to leave us four or five years to wait for the *beginning* of the

operation of your measure. This is indeed, the most "*temperate* and *moderate* "Reform" I ever heard of in my life. It is a sort of *reversionary* Reform. In short, it is a Reform that will never take place. The bill may pass into a law; but, long before the time for acting upon it shall come, either it will have been set aside by a real Reform of the House of Commons, or it will be too late to talk of Reform, or of any thing else whereby to preserve the liberties of the people and the independence of the country.

Having, in this Letter, endeavoured to shew what sort of Reform we do not want, I shall, in my next, give you my opinion as to the sort of Reform that we do want.

I am,

Your friend,

W<sup>m</sup>. COBBETT.

Boileau, 8 June, 1809.

#### LORD GAMBIER

Has, it is said, demanded a Court-martial, in consequence of certain opinions, said to have been expressed, relative to his conduct, by Lord Cochrane. The *Courier*, one of the real hireling papers, has the following paragraph upon the subject:—"Upon this interesting subject a circumstance has come to our knowledge which "we are enabled to communicate without "the fear of contradiction. It has been a "matter of surprise to many, that the important consequences resulting to the service from the late display of skill and "gallantry in Basque Roads to which we "allude, were not sanctioned by the "thanks of Parliament to lord Gambier, "and the officers and men under his command. This honourable and gratifying "mark of approbation was, however, certainly *intended* to have been moved by "his majesty's ministers; but the design "having been communicated to lord "Cochrane, who distinguished himself "in so signal a way in Basque Roads, "his lordship declared, that he should, if he "stood alone in the House of Commons, *oppose the Motion*. This declaration led of "course to further discussion, and lord "Gambier considered himself bound to "appeal for the justification of his conduct "to the Court, which will be held with all "possible dispatch. Many of the officers "who served on the occasion, are now at "home, and they have been officially informed, that their presence will be necessary."—Now, can this possibly be true? What! would Lord Gambier have been thanked had it not been for the threat-



ended opposition of Lord Cochrane; Just as if a cabinet of great big ministers and statesmen need care for what this Scotch Lord could say; who, besides, is a notorious "Jacobin," and who, the very first week he was in parliament, made that mischievous motion about the gentlemen and ladies, who do us the honour to live upon our labour, under the names of sinecure and pension holders, including Mr. and Mrs. WARD. Just as if the threats of a person like this would prevent the great and mighty Lord Mulgrave from moving the Houses of Parliament to a vote of thanks to his friend! It cannot be. It is slander. And, yet, this is not the first time, that it has been said, that Lord Gambier has demanded a court-martial. There must be something in that. Well; he certainly is the best judge of whether he ought to be tried, or not; and all that I shall say upon the subject is, that I most sincerely wish *he may have his due.*

#### AUSTRIA, SPAIN, and PORTUGAL.

With respect to these countries the most remarkable thing is, that, if we do not assist "our allies," as they are jocularly called, with any thing else, we do our share in the way of *rejoicing*. Not above six days ago, we fired the *Park and Tower guns* for what Mr. Whitbread says was no more than an attack upon SOULT's rear guard; for a "victory," in short such as would scarcely have been, in the French army, rewarded with a *musket-of-honour*, given to some serjeant, commanding a detachment. We have wasted as much powder in honour of the Wellesley victories in Portugal as would, if properly employed, have gained a victory indeed. When Buonaparté gains victories, he sends home the *standards* he takes. Where are the *standards* taken in Portugal? But, we are become a bragging nation; and we shall go on bragging to the end of the chapter.

—What we are at in Spain and Portugal I cannot imagine. What is the use of any thing we can do, unless the Spaniards themselves can immediately drive out the French? Can any man, who has but half his senses left, imagine, that if the French remain in Spain, 'till Napoleon has settled Austria, Spain will not be soon afterwards subdued?—We are told about the JUNTA's calling the *Cortez* together. But does not the reader clearly see, that the Junta will be guided by our ministers; and has he not recently heard Mr. CANNING at a tavern dinner, with his rabble of contractors about him; standing up by

the side of his brother poet and sinecure-placeman, FITZGERALD, and proclaiming to the blood-sucking crew, that war was still to be made for *Ferdinand VII*? Besides, is not Lord Wellesley gone to Spain?—It is nonsense, then, to talk of the Junta's making efforts for the liberties of the people of Spain. We are at war for Ferdinand VII, and so must the Junta be at war; and, so will not *the people* be at war.—We have, at this time, an army of 18,000 men in *Sicily*; and, for what? They may be reduced to 14 or 15,000, perhaps; but, what do they do there? These men might be very usefully employed elsewhere; and, in Sicily they are doing nothing, and can do nothing, except it be to keep the people of the country in awe. But, will this save the country from the French? The French have three times the number of men in Calabria. The distance is a mere trifle. Is it wise to waste our means in this way? Is there much reason in keeping from 12,000 to 18,000 *English* troops to take care of Sicily, while we keep about as many *foreign* troops to assist us kindly in *taking care of England*? I should like to hear the answer, which either the late or the present ministry would have to this question. I should like to see them *closely pressed* upon this point, for it is one, relative to which the public wants, and has a right to have, information.—It is surprising, but very pleasing to see, how little interest is excited, now-a-days, by the wars upon the continent. The battles between France and Austria really do not excite so much attention as a boxing match or an elopement of the Paget and Wellesley cut. This is very good. One of the purpose of Pitt's wars was to engage the attention of the people; to draw their eyes off from home. That cannot now be done. We have fixed our eyes, thanks to Mr. Wardie, fast upon St. Stephen's. That is the scene that we have to look to. I do hope, that no crafty knave will be able to invent any thing to draw the people's attention from this point.—No; let us not be cheated again.

#### THE COURT-MARTIAL.

In my next, being a double number, I will take up this subject; and, if I do not shew those *who have caused* this publication to be made, and to be circulated at such immense expence; if I do not shew them to be the *falsest*, the *most base*, *mean*, and *dirty*, of mankind, I will confess myself to merit all those epithets.

## COBBETT'S Parliamentary Debates:

The TWELFTH VOLUME of the above Work will be ready for delivery on the first of July. All communications, if sent to the Publisher's in due time, shall be carefully attended to.

### PROCEEDINGS

*In COUNTIES, CITIES, BOROUGHs, &c. relative to the recent INQUIRY in the House of Commons, respecting the Conduct of the DUKE OF YORK. (Continued from p. 858.)*

#### CITY OF BRISTOL.

At a Meeting of the Citizens of Bristol, convened at the Guildhall, the 26th day of May 1809.—William Coates, esq. in the Chair.—It was Resolved,

1. That at this momentous period, when the people are testifying the high sense they entertain of their superior rights as Britons by the sacrifices they daily make of many of the comforts, if not of the necessities of life, for the maintenance and defence of the state, they have an undoubted right to insist, that those who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs, should at least abstain from undisguised profligacy and notorious corruption.

2. That G. L. Wardle, esq. in his parliamentary exertions respecting the conduct of his royal highness the late Commander in Chief, displayed that zealous vigilance for the public welfare, that clear discernment, that pure disinterestedness, that inextinguishable ardour, and that unshaken constancy, which characterise the true patriot. That he has thereby justly acquired the admiration and gratitude of every uncorrupted member of the community, and he is requested to accept this heartfelt acknowledgement from the citizens of Bristol now assembled.

3. That our Thanks are due to sir F. Burdett, bart. for the consistency of his conduct in seconding Mr. Wardle's motion for inquiry; to lord Folkestone for his early and steady support of the measure; to Mr. Whitbread and sir S. Romilly, for their able exertions during its progress; and to general Ferguson, lord Archibald Hamilton, Mr. Madocks, and such other members of the house of commons, as by their virtuous co-operation proved themselves to be the actual representatives of the people.

4. That during the late Inquiry, we observed with the deepest regret, that in an assembly of persons stiling themselves the representatives of the people, the influence of public opinion was unblushingly contemned, and its legitimacy openly denied; but we triumph in the reflection, that the authority which his majesty's ministers dared to revile, they have found themselves compelled to obey.

5. That we consider the late happy detection of lord Castlereagh in his foul attempt on the Constitution, as a pledge on the part of the virtuous representatives of the people, that they will not slumber at their posts until our formidable enemy, corruption, be completely subdued.

6. That we look with confidence to a speedy and effectual Reform of the Commons House of Parliament, as the only means of rooting out corruption; and in effecting that Reform, we earnestly deprecate the insidious interference of those who are themselves profiting by the continuance of state abuses and reversionary sinecures.

7. That we seek no other Reform than such as shall insure to us the restoration of that free and glorious Constitution which our forefathers so bravely acquired; which they again and again so manfully asserted, and which they so religiously transmitted to their posterity as their best, their inalienable birthright.

8. That our Thanks are due to Mr. John Winter, jun. and the other independent citizens at whose instance this Meeting was convened.

9. That copies of these Resolutions be subscribed by the Chairman in the name of the Meeting, and be transmitted by him to Mr. Wardle, sir F. Burdett, lord Folkestone, sir S. Romilly, Mr. Whitbread, general Ferguson, lord A. Hamilton, and Mr. Madocks.

10. That our acknowledgments are due to Mr. Matthew Mills Coates, for the Resolutions this day adopted, and for his zealous and able exertions on the present occasion.

#### COUNTY OF HEREFORD.

At a General Meeting of the Freeholders of the County of Hereford, convened in the Shire Hall, on Friday the 19th May, by the Gentlemen, whose Requisition for that purpose had been declined by the High Sheriff.—The right hon. the earl of Oxford in the Chair.—It was Resolved unanimously,

1. That the Thanks of the Freeholders



of this county be given to G. L. Wardle, esq. for the zeal, courage, and patriotism with which (regardless of the threats of men in power) he persevered in bringing to light the corrupt practices in the office of Commander in Chief.

2. That the Thanks of the Freeholders of this county be given to sir F. Burdett, bart. for having seconded: and to lord Folkestone, for having so ably supported, Mr. Wardle.

3. That the Thanks of the Freeholders of this county be given to the 125 members of the House of Commons, who formed the Minority on Mr. Wardle's motion.

4. That with pleasure and gratitude we have observed the names of Thomas Foley, Thomas Powel Symonds, and Richard Philip Scudamore, esquires, in that honourable list.

5. That the Vote of the House of Commons on that occasion (which appears to us to be equally opposite to the Evidence adduced, and to the sentiments of the people of England), adds to our conviction of the necessity of a temperate Reform in Parliament.

6. That the heavy pressure of public taxes (which have even reached the necessities of life) renders it of the utmost importance, that faithful representatives should watch with jealousy the expenditure of the public revenue.

7. That if pensions and lucrative places (which are represented to amount to 178,994*l.* per annum, and to be received by 78 members of the House of Commons) continue to be given to the members of that house, it is vain for the people to expect their opinions to be there expressed.

8. That our only object in recommending a Reform in Parliament is to obtain for the people their acknowledged share in the government, and thereby to secure the blessings of our invaluable Constitution.

9. That the Chairman be requested to inform the members for this county, that the Freeholders here assembled, expect them to support any motion having for its object a temperate Reform of Parliament.

10. That the Chairman be also requested to inform colonel Wardle, sir F. Burdett, and lord Folkestone, of the Resolutions thanking them. (Signed)

OXFORD, Chairman.

The earl of Oxford having quitted the Chair, the Thanks of the Meeting were unanimously voted to his lordship for taking the Chair, and for his able conduct in it.

(*To be continued.*)

#### OFFICIAL PAPERS.

FRENCH ARMY IN AUSTRIA.—*Third Bulletin, dated Burghausen, April 30.*

The Emperor arrived in Muhldorf on the 27th inst. in the evening. His majesty detached the division of general Wrede to Lauffen on the Salza, in order to overtake the corps, which the enemy had in the Tyrol, and which was retreating by forced marches. General Wrede overtook the enemy's rear on the 28th, near Lauffen, took the baggage, and made many prisoners; but the enemy had sufficient time to cross the river and burn the bridge. On the 27th the duke of Dantzic arrived in Wanesburgh, and on the 28th in Altenmark. On the 29th gen. Wrede continued his march to Saltzburgh; about three leagues from the town he found the advanced posts of the enemy's army. The Bavarians pursued them closely and entered the town with them. General Wrede assures us that the division of general Jellachich is completely destroyed. That general has thus been punished for the scandalous proclamation by which he put the dagger in the hands of the Tyrolese. The Bavarians have taken 5000 prisoners, and found considerable magazines in Saltzburgh. On the 28th, at break of day, the duke of Istria arrived in Burghausen, and his advanced parties took post on the right bank of the Inn. The same day the duke of Montebello arrived in Burghausen. Count Bertrand exerted himself to the utmost to restore the bridge, which had been burnt by the enemy. It was completed on the 30th, and the whole army crossed the river. On the 28th a detachment of 50 horse chasseurs, commanded by captain Margaron, arrived in Dittmoning, where he fell in with a battalion of the famous militia, styled Landwhes, which, on his approach, retreated into a neighbouring wood. Capt. Margaron summoned them to surrender; after much deliberation, 1000 men of that valiant militia, posted in a thick wood, altogether inaccessible to cavalry, surrendered to 50 chasseurs. The Emperor wished to see them; they really excite compassion; they are badly armed, worse accoutred, and commanded by superannuated officers of artillery. The cruel and overbearing temper of the Austrians fully displayed itself in the moment of apparent success, when they occupied Munich. The high bailiff of Muhldorf was arrested by them and shot. An inhabitant of Muhldorf, of the name of

Starck, who had obtained a badge of distinction from the king of Bavaria, for the services which, during the last war, he rendered to the army, has been taken up and sent to Vienna, to stand his trial. The high bailiff of Burghausen, count Armansperg, has also been sent to Lintz, and from thence to Vienna, because in the year 1805 he did not comply with a requisition addressed to them on the part of the Austrians. The Bavarians will no doubt give a minute and faithful account of the acts of wanton cruelty committed by the Austrians in this country, that the memory thereof may be preserved by their most remote posterity, although it is extremely probable that this was the last insult which Austria will be able to offer to the allies of France. The Austrians have endeavoured, both in the Tyrol and Westphalia, to invite the inhabitants to rise in rebellion against their sovereigns. Austria has raised numerous armies, divided into corps like the French army; her troops are moving by forced marches, to imitate the French troops; her generals are publishing bulletins, proclamations, general orders—all in imitation of the French. But the ass is not ennobled to a lion because he is covered with a lion's skin; the long ears betray the ignobler beast. The Emperor of Austria has left Vienna, and on his departure published a proclamation, drawn up by Gentz, in the style and spirit of the most ridiculous performances of that kind. He is gone to Scharding, a position extremely well adapted for a sovereign, who neither wishes to be in his capital to govern his dominions, nor in the field, where he is known to be merely an incumbrance and dead weight. When he was informed of the result of the battle of Ecmuhl, he judged it prudent to leave the banks of the Inn, and retire into the interior of his dominions. The town of Scharding, which is now occupied by the duke Rivoli, has suffered much. The Austrians on their retreat set fire to their magazines, and burnt half the town which belonged to them. They had no doubt some presentiment of their future fate, that what belonged to Austria shall no longer belong to her.

*Fourth Bulletin, dated Brannau, 1st May.*

On the crossing of the bridge at Landshut, brigadier gen. Latour gave proofs of valour and coolness. Col. Lauriston placed the artillery advantageously, and contributed much to the happy issue of this splendid affair.—The bishop and the prin-

cipal public functionaries of Salzburg repaired to Burghausen, to implore the clemency of the Emperor for the country. His Majesty gave them his assurance, that they should never again come under the dominion of the House of Austria. They engaged to take measures for recalling the four battalions of the militia which the Circle had delivered, and of which part were dispersed and fled.—The head quarters are to be this day removed to Ried. At Brannau, magazines were found with 200,000 rations of biscuit, and 6,000 sacks of oats. The Circle of Ried has furnished three battalions for the militia, but the greater part of them are returned again to their habitations. The Emperor of Austria was three days at Brannau; he was at Scharding when he heard of the defeat of his army. The inhabitants consider him as the principal cause of the war. The famous volunteers of Vienna passed through this place after their defeat at Landshut, throwing away their arms, and carrying with them in all haste their terror to Vienna.—On the 21st of April an Imperial Decree was published in the capital, declaring the ports to be again opened to the English, the treaties with this ancient ally renewed, and hostilities against the common enemy begun.—Gen. Oudinot has taken prisoners a battalion of 1,000 men, between Altham and Ried. This battalion was without cavalry and artillery. On the approach of our troops, they made an attempt to fire with their small arms, but being surrounded on all sides by the cavalry, were obliged to lay down their arms. His majesty caused several brigades of light cavalry to pass in review at Burghausen, and among others those of Hesse Darmstadt; at whose appearance he was pleased to express his satisfaction. Gen. Marulaz, under whose command the corps stands, presented several of them, to whom his majesty was pleased to grant decorations of the Legion of Honour. Gen. Wrede has intercepted a courier, on whom were found a number of letters, from which we may perceive the state of confusion in which the kingdom is.

*Fifth Bulletin, dated Enns, 4th May.*

On the 1st of May gen. Oudinot, after having made 1,400 prisoners, penetrated beyond Ried, where he took 400 more, so that he this day took 1,500 men without firing a single gun.—The town of Brannau was a strong place of sufficient importance, since it commanded a bridge on the river, which forms the frontier of Austria. In



a spirit of inconsistency worthy this weak cabinet, it destroyed a fortress situated on a frontier where it might be of great utility, in order to build one at Comorn, in the midst of Hungary. Posterity will with difficulty credit this excess of inconsistency and folly.—The Emperor arrived at Ried on the 2d of May, at one of the morning, and at Lambach, at one of the afternoon of the same day.—At Ried were found an establishment of eight sets of military ovens, and magazines containing 20,000 quintals of flour.—The bridge of Lambach, on the Traun, had been cut by the enemy; it was re-established during the day.—On the same day the duke of Istria commanding the cavalry, and the duke of Montebello, with the corps of Oudinot, entered Wels. In this town were found a bakery, 12 or 15,000 quintals of flour, and magazines of wine and brandy.—The duke of Dantzic, who arrived the 30th April at Salzburg, instantly caused one brigade to march towards Kurstein and another towards Rastadt, in the direction of the Italian roads. His advanced guard, pursuing gen. Jellachich, forced him from the strong post at Colling.—On the 1st of May, the head-quarters of the duke of Rivoli were at Scharding. Adj. gen. Trinquale, commanding the advanced guard of the division of St. Cyr, met at Riedau, on the road to Neumark, with the advanced guard of the enemy. The Wurtemberg light horse, the Baden dragoons, and three companies of voltigeurs of the 4th regiment of the French line, as soon as they perceived the enemy, attacked, and pursued him to Neumark. They killed 50 men, and took 500 prisoners.—The Baden dragoons valiantly charged an half-battalion of the regiment of Jordis, and compelled them to lay down their arms. Lieut. col. D'Emmerade, who commanded them, had his horse pierced with stabs from the bayonet, major Sainte Croix took with his own hand a flag from the enemy. Our loss consists of three men killed, and 50 wounded. The duke of Rivoli continued his march on the 2d, and arrived at Lintz on the 3d. The archduke Lewis and gen. Hiller, with the remains of their corps, reinforced by a reserve of grenadiers, and by all that the country could afford them, were before the Traun with 35,000 men; but menaced with being turned by the duke of Montebello, they proceeded to Ebersberg, in order to pass the river.—On the 3d, the duke of Istria and gen. Oudinot marched towards Ebersberg, and effected a junction with the duke of Rivoli. They

met the Austrian rear-guard before Ebersberg. The intrepid battalions of the tirailleurs of the Po, and the Corsican tirailleurs, pursued the enemy, who was passing the bridge, drove into the river the cannon, waggons, and from eight to nine hundred men, and took in the town from three to four thousand men, whom the enemy had left there for its defence. Gen. Claparede, whose advanced guard was these battalions, pursued them. He halted at Ebersberg, and found 30,000 Austrians occupying a superb position. The duke of Istria passed the bridge with his cavalry, in order to support the division, and the duke of Rivoli ordered his advanced guard to be strengthened by the main body of the army. The remains of the corps of prince Lewis and gen. Hiller were lost without resource. In this extreme danger the enemy set fire to the town, which was built of wood. The fire spread in an instant in every direction. The bridge was soon enveloped, and the flames seized the joists, which it was necessary to cut.—Neither cavalry nor infantry was able to act; and the division of Claparede alone, with only four pieces of cannon, fought during three hours against 30,000 men. This battle of Ebersberg is one of the finest military occurrences, the memory of which can be preserved by history. The enemy seeing the division of Claparede cut off without any communication, advanced three times against it, and was always received and stopped by the bayonet. At length after a labour of three hours, the flames were turned aside, and a passage opened. The gen. of division, Legrand, with the 26th light infantry and the 18th of the line, marched towards the castle, which the enemy had occupied with 800 men. The sappers broke in the doors, and the flames having reached the castle, all who were within perished there. Gen. Legrand afterwards marched to the assistance of Claparede's division. Gen. Durosnel, who advanced to the right shore, with 1,000 horse, joined himself to him, and the enemy was obliged to retreat with great haste. On the first report of these events, the Emperor had himself marched up the right shore, with the divisions of Nansoutz and Molitor.—The enemy, who retreated with the greatest rapidity, arrived at night at Enns, burnt the bridge, and continued his flight on the road to Vienna. His loss consists of 12,000 men, of which 7,500 are prisoners. We also possess four pieces of cannon and two standards. The division of Claparede, which consti-



tutes a part of the grenadiers of Oudinot, covered itself with glory. It has lost 300 men killed and 600 wounded. The impetuosity of the tirailleurs of the Po, and the Corsican tirailleurs, attracted the attention of our army. The bridge, the town, and the position at Ebersberg, will be lasting monuments of their courage. The traveller will stop and say, "It is here, from these superb positions, from this long bridge, and this castle so strong from its situation, that an army of 35,000 Austrians was driven into flight by 7,000 Frenchmen."—Cohorn, general of brigade, an officer of singular intrepidity, had his horse killed under him. Colonels Cardenan and Lendy were killed.—A company of the Corsican battalion pursuing the enemy into the woods, made alone 700 prisoners.—During the affair of Ebersberg, the duke of Montebello arrived at Steyer, where he rebuilt the bridge which the enemy had cut.—The Emperor sleeps to-day at Enns, in the castle of Prince Auersperg: to-morrow will be spent in rebuilding the bridge. The Deputies of the States of Upper Austria were presented to his Majesty at his bivouac at Ebersberg. The citizens of all classes, and from all the provinces, allow that the emperor Francis II. is the aggressor: they expect great changes, and admit that the House of Austria has merited all its misfortunes. They accuse, even openly, the feeble, obstinate, and perfidious character of their sovereign, as the author of their afflictions: they manifest the deepest gratitude for the generosity which the emperor Napoleon shewed towards the capital and countries he had conquered. In common with all Europe, they are indignant at the resentment and hatred which the emperor Francis has not ceased to nourish against a nation which had been so noble and magnanimous towards him. Thus, in the opinion even of the subjects of our enemy, victory is on the side of the good cause.

*Sixth Bulletin, dated Saint Polten, May 9.*

The prince of Ponte Corvo, who commands the 9th corps, composed in a great measure of the Saxon army, and which has marched near the Bohemian frontier, spreading disquietude every where, has caused the Saxon general Gutschmitt to march to Egra. This general has been well received by the inhabitants, whom he has ordered to dismiss the landwehr

(militia.) On the 6th the head-quarters of the prince of Ponte Corvo were at Retz, between Bohemia and Ratisbon.—One Schill, a sort of robber, who was covered with crimes during the last campaign of Prussia, and who had obtained the rank of colonel, has deserted from Berlin with his whole regiment, and repaired to Wittemberg, on the Saxon frontier. He has environed that town. General Lestocq has issued a Proclamation against him as a deserter. This ridiculous movement was concerted with the party which wished to send fire and blood through Germany.—His Majesty has ordered the formation of a corps of observation of the Elbe, which will be commanded by the duke of Walmy, and composed of 60,000 men. The advanced guard is ordered to proceed to Hanau.—The duke of Montebello crossed the Enns at Steyer on the 4th, and arrived on the 5th at Amstetten, where he met the enemy's advanced guard. Colbert, gen. of brigade, caused the 20th regiment of horse chasseurs to charge a regiment of Ulans, of whom 500 were taken. The young Lauriston, 18 years of age, and who but six months ago was a page, after a singular combat, vanquished the commander of the Ulans, and took him prisoner. His Majesty has granted him the decoration of the Legion of Honour.—On the 6th, the duke of Montebello arrived at Molck, the duke of Rivoli at Amstetten, and the duke of Auerstadt at Lintz.—The remains of the corps of the archduke Lewis and general Hiller quitted Saint Polten on the 7th. Two-thirds passed the Danube at Crems; they were pursued to Mautern, where the bridge was found broken: the other third took the direction of Vienna.—On the 8th, the head-quarters of the Emperor were at St. Polten.—The head-quarters of the duke of Montebello are to-day at Sigartskirchen. The duke of Dantzic is marching from Saltsburgh to Inspruck, in order to attack in the rear the detachment which the enemy has still in the Tyrol, and which troubled the frontiers of Bavaria.—In the cellars of the abbey of Molek, were found several thousand bottles of wine, which are very useful for the army. It is not till beyond Molck that the wine country begins. It follows from the accounts delivered in, that the army has found, since the passage of the Inn, in the different magazines of

*(To be continued.)*